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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 GEORGETOWN 000297

SIPDIS

NOFORN

DS/IP/WHA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/10/2016

TAGS: [ASEC](#)

SUBJECT: RSO GEORGETOWN REQUESTS TDY ARSO SUPPORT AND
DRIVER TRAINING FOR PROTECTING AMBASSADOR

REF: A. GEORGETOWN 248

- [1](#)B. GEORGETOWN 205
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Classified By: RSO Brandon Lee for Reason 1.4 (d)

[1](#)1. (U) Action request para 9.

[1](#)2. (U) Over the last two years, physical threats against the Ambassador to Guyana have been reported from several different sources. On February 8, 2006, the Ambassador recieved a specific death threat towards himself. RSO has provided protection since that date (reftels).

[1](#)3. (S) On March 8, ARSO was providing protection for Ambassador who was in a meeting at the UNDP building, and observed a known bodyguard of Guyanese drug kingpin Shaheed "Roger" Khan across the street. RSO and ARSO are in agreement that this was not a coincidence. Khan has directed threats against the Ambassador in the past. Khan has deep roots in the security services in Guyana. (reftel D)

[1](#)4. (SBU/NF) The Ambassador has requested RSO to assist the local police bodyguards in escort portal-to-portal protection. The RSO and Ambassador firmly believe that the local bodyguards cannot provide an adequate level of protection given the recent threat level towards him and the rising likelihood that political violence will only escalate until the election. The Ambassador feels that his protection may be further jeopardized when he will have to take political stances that may cause negative responses from either political party. These stances may be interpreted in a negative manner and has the potential to create some form of retaliation directed against him. Further rumors suggest that the opposition party is planning a large-scale event directed towards the diplomatic community to disrupt the elections. Since the United States has the largest mission in Guyana, it can be assumed that the Ambassador will be a target of such an attack.

[1](#)5. (SBU) Since the ARSO has been tasked with the Ambassador's protection, the RSO program has suffered and RSO is currently not operating at an acceptable level. Basic functions of the RSO office such as emergency preparedness are not being met much less routine reports such as Quarterly Security Reviews (QSR) and overdue building surveys. RSO is trying to recover from the routine lag of having approximately fifteen TDY RSOs that preceded the current RSO. RSO will continue to provide protection for the Ambassador until he PCS' out of the country around mid August. Without additional assistance, RSO will continue to fail to meet the minimum RSO requirements. RSO is unable to resolve this issue at post and requests DS/IP/WHA provide the requested assistance.

[1](#)6. (S) Political / security background. A series of brazen crimes have hit Georgetown in recent weeks. A PARTY OF 25 TO 30 PERSONS ARMED WITH SEMI-AUTOMATIC RIFLES, SHOTGUNS, AND PISTOLS KILLED EIGHT PERSONS FEBRUARY 26 ON THE CITY'S OUTSKIRTS. THE GUNMEN MANAGED TO OPERATE WITH IMPUNITY FOR CLOSE TO AN HOUR BY BLOCKING TRAFFIC ON THE EAST BANK HIGHWAY. ALSO, THE GUYANA DEFENCE FORCE (GDF) ANNOUNCED FEBRUARY 28 THAT THIRTY-THREE AK-47 SEMI-AUTOMATIC RIFLES AND FIVE AUTO-PISTOLS HAD DISAPPEARED, PRESUMED STOLEN, FROM ITS GEORGETOWN WEAPONS STOREHOUSE (LOCATED LESS THAN A MILE FROM THE CHANCERY). Several prominent Guyanese - including a former Commissioner of Police and head of the GDF - believe that these crimes were driven by political motives. Credable independent sources have indicated that these weapons may be used in a coup attempt preceding the election. There is an undeniable connection between the deteriorating security situation in Guyana and the upcoming national elections due constitutional by August 4. There is credible evidence that heavily-armed groups associated with the main political parties may target high-profile individuals during the build-up to elections.

17. The cost of the TDY is listed below:

Airfare: N/A

Per Diem: 131 days x \$46 = \$6046

Lodging: Post Expense

18. (SBU) RSO Comment: With a month of providing American protection for the Ambassador, the RSO and ARSO do not feel as though the bodyguards, performance level is improving. The bodyguards do not make efforts to correct their performance after receiving day-to-day instruction. RSO believes that changing the bodyguard will not resolve the constant errors of the detail being that the errors are cultural and not the lack of knowledge of protection etiquette. The bodyguards have received formal DS PRS training in the past.

19. (U) RSO Georgetown respectfully requests one (1) TDY ARSO to assist in the portal-to-portal protection of the Ambassador until his departure in mid August and DS drivers training for four FSN's assigned to the two vehicle Ambassador's detail.

110. (SBU) Ambassadors Comments: Since my arrival to post in August 2003, there have been several threats made against me. Several of these threats were deemed to be credible and necessitated a body-guard detail for all my in-country movements. Recent threats made against me, heightened tension, surrounding the upcoming elections and my name appearing on a list of persons to be killed, have required additional security measures by the RSO. These have included an armed police guard at my residence and an RSO or ARSO escort. I believe that these enhanced security measures are entirely appropriate. These measures have placed an added strain on posts' limited security resources to the point where DS assistance is needed. I therefore fully concur with RSO Georgetown request for a TDY RSO to assist with portal-to-portal protection.

BULLEN